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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/540,832	06/24/2005	Masayoshi Handa	1422-0680PUSI	2135
2292	7590	08/24/2006	EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH PO BOX 747 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			ZALUKAEVA, TATYANA	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3761	
DATE MAILED: 08/24/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/540,832

Applicant(s)

HANDA ET AL.

Examiner

Tatyana Zalukaeva

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 June 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 09/26/2005.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Obayashi et al (U.S. 4,863,989).

3. Obayashi discloses a water absorbent resin composition comprising a water absorbent resin an oxygen containing inorganic salt and organic antioxidant (abstract). Inorganic salts are listed in col.2, lines 63-68, col.3, lines 1-17 and include each and every specie claimed by Applicant in claims 1 and 2. Organic antioxidants are listed in col.3, lines 42-67, and include each and every claimed specie for such antioxidant. Inorganic salt is present in the amounts 0.01-10% by weight (col. 3, lines 19-21), which anticipates the instantly claimed range, as per claim 3.

Inorganic salt is present in the amount of 0.001-10 parts by weight (col.4, lines 1-5), which anticipates the range for the antioxidant., as per claim 6. The preparation of the absorbent article is described in col.6, lines 5-11.

With regard to the content of iron as being at most 1ppm, nothing in the disclosure of Obayashi shows that any iron content is present (the polymers are not disclosed as being obtained using ferrocene catalysts), and thus the limitation of the claim 1 is met. Even more, the composition of Obayashi is identical in the content and amounts of

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ingredients to the claimed composition, and therefore, the rejection is made in the sense of The above rejections were made in the sense of *In re Spada*, 911 F 2d 705, 709 15 USPQ 1655, 1658 (Fed. Cir. 1990), which settles that when the claimed compositions are not novel, they are not rendered patentable by recitation of properties, whether or not these properties are shown or suggested in prior art. The identical compositions cannot have mutually exclusive properties, and therefore the limitation of claim 1 is met. Limitations of claim 9 are disclosed in col.6, lines 5-11, wherein the liquid permeable sheet is covered with absorbent composition and further laminated with liquid impermeable layer.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

6. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of

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the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Obayashi.

Obayashi discloses the use of his composition in the absorbent article for urine retention, however does not specify the content of the resin composition as per claim 8.

However, Example "Preparation of an absorbent article" in col.6, lines 5-11 shows the content of the composition close to 95% if calculated using the are of the sheet, basis weight of the pulp and weight of the composition. When the claimed range and the prior art range are very similarly, the range of the prior art establishes *prima facie* obviousness because one of ordinary skill in the art would have expected the similar ranges to have the same properties. See *in re Peterson*, 65 USPQ2d 1379, 1382, citing *titanium Metals Corp. V. Banner*, 227 USPQ 773, 779.

Double Patenting

7. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir.

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1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

8. Claims 1-9 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-9 of copending Application No. 10/561,450. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both set of claims contain water absorbent resin, oxygen containing reducing agent, organic antioxidant. In addition the claims of US'450 contain chelating agent, however, the transitional phrase comprising in the instant claims does not preclude the composition of having any other major components, even in the major amounts, and the use of chelates in such compositions is known to those skilled in the art. .

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

.Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Tatyana Zalukaeva at telephone number (571) 272-1115.

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Tatyana Zalukaeva

SPE

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Zalukaeva', with a stylized flourish at the end.